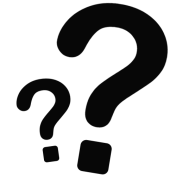
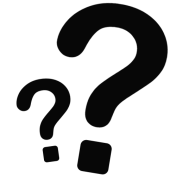
**Questioning Martin Luther**

**Overview:**

Martin Luther is considered the key figure in the Reformation and is regarded as a revolutionary figure that changed the course of history. One quality that set him apart at this time was his skepticism,  or questionning attitude. It was revolutionary for him to question the church’s practices and encourage people to read documents for themselves instead of rely on the clergy to interpret documents for them.

Today we are going to take a page out of Martin Luther’s book (pun intended) and read documents from this time for ourselves. As historians, it is essential that you look at a variety of sources and multiple perspectives in order to make our own conclusions. After all, that is what Martin Luther would want us to do.

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| **Tasks:** |

**Individual Work**: Reading to attain a more holistic understanding of Martin Luther.

1. Read, highlight, and annotate the documents. Some of these documents are challenging. Be sure to highlight and/ or underline key words and phrases and do not hesitate to look up words you don’t know.
2. Create different levels of questions that correspond with individual documents and/ or the document packet as a whole.

**Group Work:** Creating a Guiding Question

1. Discuss the documents in your group. Share your thoughts and questions. What did you find surprising, relevant, or confusing?
2. Create ONE essential question that we could use for our Socratic Seminar.

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| **Create a Document Based Question** |

**Next Class:** Socratic Seminar

1. Take a stance: Come to class prepared to discuss the essential question. Remember a Socratic Seminar is a method to try to understand information by engaging in a rich conversation that focuses on asking questions and using evidence to seek deeper understanding of complex ideas. You should come prepared with textual evidence that you would like to discuss and questions.

**Document 1**



**Source: Painting titled “Traum zu Schwinitz”  Lucas Cranach the Elder**

**Document 2**

In the 1370s in England, the scholar John Wycliffe was openly critical of the church, and specifically what he perceived to be the arrogance and corruption of the clergy.

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| If a true man shall displease a worldly prelate [bishop or high priest] by teaching and maintaining God’s law, he shall be slandered for an evil man, and forbidden to teach Christ’s Gospel, and the people shall be charged upon pain of the greater curse [excommunication], to flee, and not to hear such a man, for to save their own souls. And this shall be done under the colour of holiness; for they will say that such a man teacheth heresy, and bring many false witnesses and notaries against him in his absence, and in his presence speak no word. … …Also [bishops and high priests] make many new points of belief, and say it is not enough to believe in Jesus Christ…unless a man also believe that the bishop of Rome [the Pope] is head of holy church. And certainly the apostles of Jesus Christ never constrained any man to believe thus concerning himself.  *Source: Wycliffe, John. De Conversatione Ecclesiasticorum. From Tracts and Treatises of John*  *de Wycliffe, ed. Robert Vaughan. London: Blackburn and Pardon, 1845.* |

**Document 3**

Pope Gregory XI: The Condemnation of Wycliffe (1382), Gregory XI condemning John Wycliffe for questioning the Catholic Church. Wycliffe, an English theologian and reformer, was a precursor of the Protestant Reformation.

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| By the insinuation of many, if they are indeed worthy of belief, deploring it deeply, it has come to our ears that John de Wycliffe, rector of the church of Lutterworth, in the diocese of Lincoln, Professor of the Sacred Scriptures, has fallen into such a detestable madness that he does not hesitate to dogmatize and publicly preach, or rather vomit forth from the recesses of his breast, certain propositions and conclusions which are erroneous and false. He has cast himself also into the depravity of preaching heretical dogmas which strive to subvert and weaken the state of the whole church and even secular polity, some of which doctrines, in changed terms, it is true, seem to express the perverse opinions…He has polluted certain of the faithful of Christ by sprinkling them with these doctrines, and led them away from the right paths of the aforesaid faith to the brink of perdition. |

**Document 4**

As early as 1508, the Dutch writer Erasmus was criticizing pardons, but his writings did not get the attention of church official because Erasmus presented his criticisms in a less confrontational manner than did Martin Luther in his Ninety-Five Theses. The following is an excerpt from The Praise of Folly.

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| And what shall I say of those who comfortably delude themselves with imaginary pardons for their sins, and who measure their time in purgatory with an hourglass into years, months, days, and hours, with all the precision of a mathematical table? There are plenty, too, who, relying upon certain magical little certificates and prayers – which some pious imposter devised either in fun or for the benefit of his pocket, -- believe they may procure [a rich life], nay in the end, a seat at the right hand of Christ in heaven…The trader, the soldier, and judge think that they can clean up [the sins of a lifetime] by sacrificing a golden coin from their ill-gotten gains… The greater part of the monks exhibit such confidence in ceremonies and trivial human traditions….  Source: Erasmus, Desiderius. The Praise of Folly. From Readings in European History, ed.  James Robinson. Boston: Ginn and Company, 1906. |

**Document 5**

With the sixty-days past, Luther gathered with students near a church outside of Wittenberg castle and threw the proclamation of the pope on a bonfire of already burning Catholic and anti-Luther writings. He then wrote a pamphlet entitled Against the Execrable Bull of Antichrist in response to the pope.

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| I have heard that a bull against me has gone through the whole earth before it came to me, because being a daughter of darkness it feared the light of my face. …whoever wrote this bull, he is Antichrist. …this bull condemns me from its own word without any proof from Scripture, whereas I back up all my assertions from the Bible. I demand that they show absolutely…point by point and not in a lump, just what is heretical. Let them show where I am a heretic, or dry up their spittle. They say that some articles are heretical, some erroneous, some scandalous, some offensive.… You then, Leo X, you cardinals and the rest of you at Rome, I tell you to your faces: … “I call upon you to renounce your diabolical blasphemy and audacious impiety, and, if you will not, we shall all hold your seat as possessed and oppressed by Satan, the damned seat of Antichrist; in the name of Jesus Christ”…as they excommunicated me for the sacrilege of heresy, so I excommunicate them in the name of the sacred truth of God. Christ will judge whose excommunication will  stand.  Source: Bainton, Roland. Here I Stand: A Life of Martin Luther. New York: Abingdon-  Cokesbury Press, 1950. |

**Document 6**

Martin Luther's reply when summoned to appear before the Emperor at the Diet of Worms

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| "I cannot submit my faith either to the Pope or to the Councils, because it is clear as day they have frequently erred and contradicted each other. Unless therefore, I am convinced by the testimony of Scripture...I cannot and will not retract...Here I stand, I can do no other. So help my God, Amen." |

**Document 7**

Against the Robbing and Murdering Hordes of Peasants (1525), Martin Luther

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| ...they are starting a rebellion, and violently robbing and plundering monasteries and castles which are not theirs, by which they have a second time deserved death in body and soul, if only as highwaymen and murderers.... For rebellion is not simple murder, but is like a great fire, which attacks and lays waste a whole land.... Therefore, let every-one who can, smite, slay and stain, secretly or openly, remembering that nothing can be more pod' venous, hurtful or devilish than a rebel....  First, I will not oppose a ruler who, even though he does not tolerate the Gospel, will smite and punish these peasants without offering to submit the case to judgment. For he is within his rights, since the peasants are not contending any longer for the Gospel, but have become faithless, perjured, disobedient, rebellious murderers, robbers and blasphemers, whom even heathen rulers have the right and power to punish; nay, it is their duty to punish them, for it is just for this purpose that they bear the sword, and are "the ministers of God upon him that doeth evil....' |

**Document 8**

Since the crusades, Anti-Semitism increased in Europe. Luther failed to convert Jews in any appreciable numbers and he became embittered with that failure. It is in this sense that he wrote Concerning the Jews and Their Lies.

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| What shall we Christians do with this rejected and condemned people, the Jews? Since they live among us, we dare not tolerate their conduct, now that we are aware of their lying and reviling and blaspheming. If we do, we become sharers in their lies, cursing and blasphemy. Thus we cannot extinguish the unquenchable fire of divine wrath, of which the prophets speak, nor can we convert the Jews. With prayer and the fear of  God we must practice a sharp mercy to see whether we might save at least a few from  the glowing flames...I shall give you my sincere advice: First to set fire to their synagogues or schools and to bury and cover with dirt whatever will not burn, so that no man will ever again see a stone or cinder of them.  Second, I advise that their houses also be razed and destroyed. Third, I advise that all their prayer books and Talmudic writings, in which such idolatry, lies, cursing and blasphemy are taught, be taken from them.  Fourth, I advise that their rabbis be forbidden to teach henceforth on pain of loss of life  and limb. Fifth, I advise that safe conduct on the highways be abolished completely for the Jews.  For they have no business in the countryside, since they are not lords, officials, tradesmen, or the like. Let them stay at home. Sixth, I advise that usury [loans] be prohibited to them, and that all cash and treasure  of silver and gold be taken from them and put aside for safekeeping. The reason for such a measure is that, as said above, they have no other means of earning a livelihood than usury, and by it they have stolen and robbed from us all they possess. Such money should now be used in no other way than the following: Whenever a Jew is sincerely converted, he should be handed one hundred, two hundred, or three  hundred florins, as personal circumstances may suggest. With this he could set himself up in some occupation for the support of his poor wife and children, and the maintenance of the old or feeble. For such evil gains are cursed if they are not put to use with God's blessing in a good and worthy cause. Seventh, I commend putting a flail, an ax, a hoe, a spade, a distaff, or a spindle into the hands of young, strong Jews and Jewesses and letting them earn their bread in the sweat of their brow.  Source: McKim, Donald K. The Cambridge Companion to Martin Luther. Cambridge, U.K.:  Cambridge UP, 2003. |

**Notes for the Seminar:**

My Focus Questions (at least three):

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#2

#3

My Stance:

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Reason # 1:

Textual Evidence

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Reason # 2:

Textual Evidence:

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Reason # 3:

Textual Evidence:

**Rubric:**

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|  | **5** | **4** | **3** | **2** | **1** |
| **Quality of Comments** | Timely and appropriate comments, thoughtful and reflective, responds respectfully to other student's remarks, provokes questions and comments from the group | Volunteers comments, most are appropriate and reflect some thoughtfulness, leads to other questions or remarks from student and/or others | Volunteers comments but lacks depth, may or may not lead to other questions from students | Struggles but participates, occasionally offers a comment when directly questioned, may simply restate questions or points previously raised, may add nothing new to the discussion or provoke no responses or question | Does not participate and/or only makes negative or disruptive remarks, comments are inappropriate or off topic |
| **Resource/ Document Reference** | Clear reference to text being discussed and connects to it to other text or reference points from previous readings and discussions | Has done the reading with some thoroughness, may lack some detail or critical insight | Has done the reading; lacks thoroughness of understanding or insight | Has not read the entire text and cannot sustain any reference to it in the course of discussion | Unable to refer to text for evidence or support of remarks |
| **Active Listening** | Posture, demeanor and behavior clearly demonstrate respect  and attentiveness to others | Listens to others most of the time, does not stay focused on other's comments (too busy formulating own) or loses continuity of discussion. Shows consistency in responding to the comments of others | Listens to others some of the time, does not stay focused on other's comments (too busy formulating own) or loses continuity of discussion. Shows some consistency in responding to the comments of others | Drifts in and out of discussion, listening to some remarks while clearly missing or ignoring others | Disrespectful of others when they are speaking; behavior indicates total non-involvement with group or discussion |